



Amanda and Jonathon

# KindnessMatters

Newsletter of Cancer Care Foundation of Tidewater  
We Fight Cancer With Kindness

## The Ultimate Wedding Gift

*Over the summer, we received a donation by mail from Amanda Davis, a social worker with the Riverside Health System. A curious note was attached. The note said that Amanda and her fiancé, Jonathon were making a donation to Cancer Care Foundation of Tidewater in lieu of purchasing favors for their upcoming wedding in September. On their big day, Amanda and Jonathon will frame a message informing guests that a donation has been made to Cancer Care Foundation in their honor. What a wonderful and generous gesture! We asked Amanda to tell us a little more about how she got into social work and of course, about Jonathon—and their decision to plan their wedding, and their lives together, with an emphasis on caring for others.*

Social work wasn't always my passion. I would have to say, social work found me. I attended Christopher Newport University, originally as a business and marketing major, soon to find that economics and accounting courses were required! I started losing interest in the whole appeal of business; the fast pace and conquering the world mentality. But...now what was I going to do with my life? I took an elective course offered by the Social Work department, Diversity and Cultural Competence, which addressed social issues in our society that made me feel compassion and a sense of urgency. We discussed topic like gender issues, poverty, abuse, inequality, trauma, and race. This course really challenged me on a personal level. I then went abroad to Costa Rica with other social work majors and I studied International Human Rights including

domestic violence and child abuse. My curiosity about social issues, both at home and abroad was piqued, and I knew I wanted to be a change agent. I found what made my heart beat and I was going to be a social worker! Prior to attending university, I never knew what a social worker was, and I thank Christopher Newport for requiring elective courses to expose students to other disciplines. Upon graduation I attended graduate school at Virginia Commonwealth University to get my Master's degree in Social Work. During my career I have had the privilege to work in the school system, justice system, mental health, foster care and adoptions, child protective services, and now oncology. I could not imagine myself doing anything else. It is an honor to be a part of someone's life and to help, even if it is in a small way. In my present position, I work with adults that are coping with the psychosocial issues related to their oncology and hematology treatment.

After my studies and the start of my career, Jonathon and I met on a dating website and we corresponded during one of his deployments. As we got to know one another, we decided to meet in person when he returned stateside. A blind date was set, February 14, 2012—followed by a few years of dating and a proposal at Niagara Falls in July 2016. Over the past 4 years we have had many blessings and now we find ourselves planning our wedding for September 2, 2017, with the support of family and friends. We are very excited to spend the rest of our lives together, but during the wedding planning we have struggled with some of the "stuff"—particularly the idea of wedding favors.

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# From the Directors

Julie Ambrosio, Assistant Director

**I don't know about you, but sometimes I struggle with knowing exactly the right thing to say or do when someone is in crisis. Be specific or vague? Say too little or too much? Be at their side or give them space? Stand back but be available or jump in and take charge?**

If you know me at all, I am far more likely to err on the side of specifically saying too much and taking charge!

I have learned in my work with patients, families and volunteers at Cancer Care Foundation of Tidewater that there are really only two rules for helping. ASK AND LISTEN. When you ASK what you can do for someone in crisis, you're not asking a rhetorical question, like a passing "how are you?" in the hallway. Think about it - the fact that we usually keep walking as we're asking how someone is, reminds us that we're uttering rhetorical formalities, just using words, not really being present and listening. When you're really present with a person and asking them a real question about what you can do for them or how you can support them, you need to LISTEN to their answer. To LISTEN is a gift of support in itself.

To support someone in need you might feel most comfortable baking a lasagna to drop



Ready for delivery!

off at their house. The gesture says you care, you're meeting a basic human need and it keeps you at a comfortable distance. But what that person might actually need is for you to do 3 loads of laundry, mow their lawn or take

their kids to soccer practice this week. You will only know that if you ASK and LISTEN. If all you do is ASK (and deliver that lasagna), the person you're supporting will certainly appreciate the meal, but they might be enjoying it surrounded by piles of dirty laundry, an unruly lawn and squirrely kids who need to work off energy at sports practice.

But what if the lasagna was just the opening act to the ASKING AND LISTENING? Then it becomes way more than a meal - it becomes a vehicle for caring, a bridge to get to the meaningful stuff. That's exactly how it works at Cancer Care Foundation of Tidewater. Our volunteers use food every day as a vehicle to break the ice, to start the conversation. The food they serve is the ASK—I am here if you need something... just let me know, I am ready to LISTEN. Amazing things happen when patients and families encounter our volunteers. Needs get met. Our Acts of Kindness volunteers calm fears and lift spirits, and so much more! Sometimes there's a big need, like eyeglasses, nutritional support or a car repair but many times the immediate and concrete need is a bit smaller. To know that someone cares about your cancer battle and to know a perfect stranger is willing to ASK and LISTEN.

So in this season of caring, please find someone in need and go ahead and deliver that lasagna—and LISTEN.

## Kind Words

Notes of thanks from patients supported by Cancer Care Foundation of Tidewater.

Thanks for helping me and my wife in our time of need. Its nice to know that you are there. God bless you and your organization. Your care for people makes me feel good inside.

— David, Patient.

The generosity and support I received from the Cancer Care Foundation of Tidewater gave me hope and faith when I absolutely had none. Thank you so very much. — Valery, Patient.

Thank you so much for the nutrition assistance card. You are truly a blessing for me. A big weight has been taken off me. — Pamela, Patient.

I would like to thank the Cancer Care Foundation for everything they've done for me. I appreciate it from the bottom of my heart.  
— Sheryl, Patient



## In Her Own Words | **Cassie Cuffe**

I have always enjoyed helping people. I recently retired from Virginia Beach Animal Care and Adoption Center where I served 23 years as an Animal Control Officer. I have also worked as a CPR instructor for the VB Police Department and with Project Lifesaver. In 2007, my daughter Amy was diagnosed with a rare form of breast cancer; which she is still battling today with treatment at VOA. It was on Amy's first day of chemotherapy that I encountered Cancer Care Foundation of Tidewater. I was very impressed with the compassion and care the volunteers showed the patients and their caregivers.

Amy is my true hero as she has overcome so many obstacles during her 10 year fight. She was first diagnosed with cancer when she was pregnant with my grandson Logan. Amy's cancer was so aggressive that she had to have both surgery and chemotherapy during her pregnancy. Today, Logan is 9 years old—he really is our miracle! Amy remains steadfast in her war against cancer.

After my retirement, I decided that volunteering with the Acts of Kindness program would be a way to give back for all the kindness Amy has received during her treatment. I have found that in the act of giving, my true reward has come from the joy I receive from the patients themselves. Their smiling faces and gratitude makes it a pleasure to serve them. When I am not volunteering with my Acts of Kindness team(s) on Wednesdays or Fridays, I am training a puppy to become a therapy dog. My reward for that volunteer "job" is slobbery kisses!



## In Her Own Words | **Mary Keough**

My first experience with the Cancer Care Foundation was many years ago when my husband was a patient at Virginia Oncology. The kindness and compassion shown to us during that time is something I'll never forget. It's amazing how much a pimento cheese sandwich and a friendly smile can mean while going through your treatments. Now that I'm a volunteer, I feel truly blessed to be able to give this bit of comfort to other patients. Their smiles and nods of thanks give me a true sense of fulfillment.

It has been wonderful to have my grandson working along with Louise, Anita and I this summer. William is a junior at Maury High School where he is enrolled in the Health and Medical Sciences Program, a partnership with Eastern Virginia Medical School. He hopes to pursue a career in medicine in the field of Surgical Oncology. Volunteering at Cancer Care Foundation has been a tremendous opportunity for him. We both come each week to support the patients and their families and to honor a husband and grandfather that was such an important part of our lives.



## **Amanda & Jonathon**

*Cont'd from p. 1*

The purpose of a wedding favor is to thank our family and friends for being present and supporting us on our wedding day - the starting line for the life we are going to build together. Isn't another magnet, candle holder or bottle opener just more junk!? With unsure feelings, we continued to search for a unique idea that was more practical. Finally, I stumbled upon the concept of "in lieu of gifts" where future Mr. and Mrs.'s donated to their favorite charities rather than spending that money on souvenir-like items. My friends at Cancer Care Foundation of Tidewater immediately came to mind! For years they have

been an invaluable resource to me and my patients. What a relief for patients in treatment, when everything else feels like chaos, to have support that says "here's one less thing to worry about." As a social worker, I am so grateful to have a resource like Cancer Care Foundation to offer to my patients. I feel very confident in the purpose and mission of the organization, and know first-hand the difference they make in the lives of cancer patients in treatment. Planning our wedding day, with less junk and more meaning (metaphorically and literally), was the right choice for us. We are eager to tell our wedding guests that we have made a gift in their honor to such a meaningful cause that touches so many lives. Maybe this concept will catch fire and more

donations will be made to help a cancer patient in need and also start matrimony off on the right path! Thanks for hearing our story!

*—Amanda & Jonathon*





## Registered Agent Phil Trapani

To me, telling people to give until it hurts is like the present fad of telling twenty-some-things to identify and pursue their passions—a lot easier said than done. Not everyone can, or is inclined to, give until it hurts. And I don't believe it's not necessary. It sets unrealistic goals that can stymie present action. I encourage my three sons, and other unsuspecting young adults, to simply do anything that gets you in front of new people and experiences. Hopefully a passion will find you, or at least you can fill your life with work and experiences that increase your happiness. I look at giving in the same way, a series of small steps rather than one grand one.

I learned from my father that little things go a long way. Even though he died of leukemia on November 7, 1997 it seems that almost every year I meet a stranger who says that my father helped them oftentimes in a seemingly small way. It was never that he gave large sums of money, instead, the stories usually reveal that he simply listened and cared. Last month I met an older man who said that

even though my father was the City Attorney, my father met privately with him, an hourly city employee, to hear a grievance. The man said he could not recall his problem. He just wanted to tell me that he still remembers being surprised that my father agreed to meet him, and that he remembers sitting in his office being heard. That memory has to be at least twenty years old. My father often said that that little things can have real impact, and it's true.

Like most, if not all of you reading this, I recently lost out on a \$758M lottery. With that lose evaporated my dreams of funding a cancer cure. But, it's okay that I missed yet another lottery because long ago I came to terms with the fact that I don't even have a fraction of the money Bill Gates has to donate. Over time I have found great satisfaction in making smaller gifts to good causes. Even though I almost always give anonymously (my sister outed me here), I like giving to smaller causes where I can see the results. I tend to give to causes and institutions that are for kids, especially schools. No buildings yet, but lots of things that I have overheard teachers lamenting at both public and private

schools. Children's hospitals are another favorite of mine. Amazon is great for quickly satisfying a need though sometimes it forces you to deny that your name was on the package that enclosed the school supplies.

My sister, Tricia Izard is the Executive Director of Cancer Care Foundation of Tidewater and she asked me if I'd write down why I support her passion. I had to think about that more than I realized. Sure, I do it because she is my sister, and because my father died of leukemia and I hate cancer, especially leukemia, but I mostly do it because I like local causes. As I see it, if you throw a small stone into a little pond you can see it effects immediately, but that same stone won't effect a large pond too much. That's not to say it does not add to the pond, it's just less noticeable. I contribute to Cancer Care Foundation of Tidewater and other, mostly local, causes, because I am pond person. I like to see the effects. Also, because I lost the lottery.

It only takes a short visit to a treatment room at any Virginia Oncology treatment center to see the ripples, lots of them, every day. Who would have thought that a bite to eat and a smiling face could anxiety and pleasantly distract people from cancer treatments? Because of Cancer Care Foundation of Tidewater, many patients' memories of a difficult time are populated with the smiling faces of caring volunteers donating their time. But that is not all that Cancer Care does for those battling cancer. You can get chills reading a thank you note from someone who had a utility bill paid or a burden lifted by a Cancer Care humanitarian grant. Most of us won't get to cure a disease like cancer, but you can help the people who must await that cure. Even a modest donation of time or money really does go a long way at Cancer Care Foundation of Tidewater.



## Events

**October 11**

**Bayville Women's Golf Tournament** | Bayville Golf Course, VA Beach

*All proceeds benefit Cancer Care Foundation of Tidewater.*

**November 4**

**4th Annual Dolphin Circle 5K** | Cox High School, VA Beach

Join us on Saturday, November 4th for the 4th Annual Dolphin Circle 5K Run/Walk. Register at [www.dolphincircle.org](http://www.dolphincircle.org). All proceeds benefit Cancer Care Foundation of Tidewater.

**December 4-8**

**Marie Hadley Memorial Bake Sale** | Virginia Oncology, Lake Wright

*The Most Wonderful Time of the Year!* Our annual Marie Hadley Memorial Bake Sale is just around the corner! We urge all of our friends to get involved!

**We need your baked goods,**

**crafts and time! Please**

**contact Margie Tekamp,**

**757-408-3168 or Karen**

**Devenio at 757-681-6506 to**

**donate to the bake sale**

**or to sign up for a**

**volunteer shift.**



## FOOD FOR THOUGHT



Cancer and its treatment can be stressful for people with cancer and their caregivers. Relaxation techniques and other mind/body practices can help calm your mind and sharpen your ability to focus. These techniques offer creative ways to reduce stress caused by cancer and to maintain inner peace. For example, some people use these techniques to help them relax as they wait for treatments or test results.

*Here are some techniques that can help you cope with the challenges of cancer:*

### Breathing Exercises

At the core of life is breath. Laughing and sighing are the body's natural ways of getting us to breathe deeply.

That is why we often feel calmer or rejuvenated after these experiences. Anxiety and stress can make us take short, shallow breaths. Shallow breathing, which does not allow enough oxygen to enter our bodies, can make us even more anxious. Try this four-step breathing exercise.

It can be done anywhere, anytime:

1. Take in a deep breath from your diaphragm (this is the muscle between your lungs and abdomen).
2. Hold the breath for several seconds—however long is comfortable for you—and then exhale slowly.
3. Repeat steps 1 and 2 two more times.
4. Afterward, relax for a moment and let yourself feel the experience of being calm.

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**To leave the world a bit better. To know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded.**

*~Ralph Waldo Emerson*

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**Health is a large word. It embraces not the body only, but the mind and spirit as well... and not today's pain or pleasure alone, but the whole being and outlook of a man.**

*~EJames H. West*

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### Meditation

Repetitive prayers are a form of meditation. Two other traditional forms of meditation include one-pointed and two-pointed meditation.

One-pointed meditation focuses on a word or sound called a mantra. Many people create their own mantra from an affirming word, such as "peace," "love" or "hope." Once you choose a mantra, find a safe, quiet place and repeat it to yourself during 15- to 20-minute sittings. The goal is to relax the mind,

which has a natural tendency to jump from one idea to the next—and from one worry to the next. Do not try to force your mind back to your mantra when you notice it has wandered. Simply guide it back gently, accepting that it may stray again.

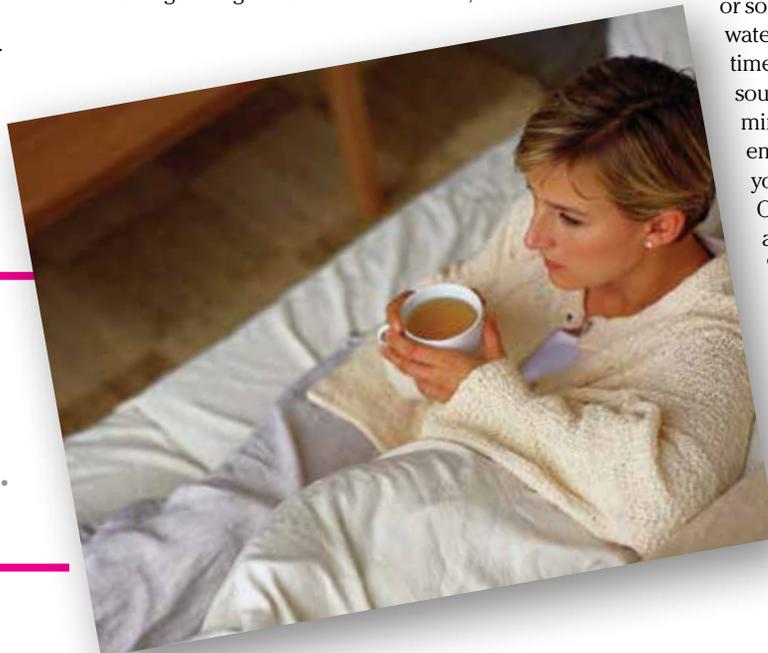
Two-pointed meditation is also called mindful or insight meditation. With this technique, you relax your mind by focusing on your breath. As your mind jumps around, practice non-judgmental awareness—simply observe the pattern of your thoughts and gently guide them back to focus on your breath. Non-judgmental awareness allows you to separate yourself from emotions and sensations rather than getting pulled into them. One benefit of this type of meditation is that you can practice it while seated quietly or when doing daily activities.

### Guided Imagery

This stress-reducing technique combines deep breathing and meditation. As you practice deep breathing, imagine a peaceful scene or setting, perhaps from a memory. Once you are relaxed, you can create a "wakeful dream" in which, for example, you envision pain being washed away or your body becoming stronger.

Many people practice guided imagery exercises while listening to recordings of ambient sounds. These are usually music or sounds from nature, such as waterfalls or ocean waves. Sometimes just listening to ambient sounds is enough to relax your mind and briefly transport you emotionally to a place in which you feel safer and more secure. Other mind/body practices are yoga, tai chi, and Qigong. These techniques are often taught at health clubs, YMCAs and senior centers around the country.

*Reprinted from  
www.CancerCare.org*



## BEACH Buddies

Cancer Care Foundation of Tidewater is proud to be the community sponsor of the BEACH Buddies program at Eastern Virginia Medical School. The program pairs medical students with pediatric oncology and hematology patients at Children's Hospital of the King's Daughters. The program provides a wonderful and unique source of support, friendship and fun to children at CHKD, while providing medical students with hands-on learning to understand the importance of emotional support during medical treatment.



BEACH Buddies enjoys a fun-filled afternoon at Dave and Busters

There are few things more inspiring to me than the courage of patients facing the diagnosis and treatment of cancer. When I first arrived at EVMS I was drawn to the BEACH Buddies program and wanted to help in my own small way. I had seen my own grandmother face pancreatic cancer and was amazed at her courage and her refusal to let her illness take anything away from the

time she spent with us and her warm and kindhearted nature.

When I arrived at the clinic at CHKD I saw children smiling and playing games while loving family members and medical staff took care of them. I realized that the clinic was a place meant to let these kids feel like kids at a time when they are facing some-

thing scary. On my first day visiting the clinic I walked over to the area of the clinic devoted to video games where there was a group of kids gathered around the TV's there, I sat down and for an hour we were laughing and joking and playing. I have many memories of coming into the clinic and just drawing, painting, building Legos or just being silly with everyone there.

I remember the wide smiles and laughter at an event at a local farm near EVMS where families played in the petting zoo or picked pumpkins to take home and carve during Halloween. I realized how during the fun times we had and I witnessed, it wasn't patients and caretaker's I was seeing but children and families enjoying their time together. Their strength, smiles, courage, and refusal to let a diagnosis define or change them has taught and shown me the humanity that always lies behind any diagnosis. These experiences have reminded me how important it is for patients to have a support network and a human connection that goes beyond medical treatment. As a medical student I have learned so much from these children and their families, experiences that will always shape my future in healthcare.

— Ravneet Kamboj, MD2019

Ravneet Kamboj is a third year medical student at EVMS, he is originally from New York City and has always been interested in helping others. He is currently interested in Emergency Medicine although keeping an open mind about what he wants to do. Ravneet hopes for the opportunity to travel our country and the world to help those in need.

## With Love and Remembrance

### Memorials

Feb—Sept 15, 2017

Bill Beigay  
Joe Benson  
Jean Birsch  
Larry Bobst  
James A. Borum, III  
Shirley B. Burns  
Barbara Byers  
Norma Jean Byron  
John DeDeyn  
Terry Diones  
Joy D. Durham  
Rowena Fullinwider  
Ruth Greenwood  
William A. Haddock  
Bill Haines  
John P "Jack" Harper, Jr.  
Tom Holcomb  
Debra L. Holland  
Kathleen Hollowood  
Sandra P. Hooper

Dean A. Hurst  
Betty Jennings  
Patricia Jennison  
Joan Joyner  
Amanda Kinzer  
Donald Laster  
Raymond A. Lee  
Gerry LeMay  
Pamela Leigh Leonard  
Alexander A. Leuzzi  
Harry Louer  
Chet Lucido, III  
David Miller  
Brenda Moore  
Ruby Moore  
Sherman Moore  
Pat Natividad  
DeLaine Neathery  
Della Norwell  
Darla Obel  
Diddie Bell Ossi  
Marie Peterson  
Michelle Krick Cole Pierce  
Daniel Price

Kelly Pack Powell  
David E. Ramey  
Marvin Rhodes  
Betty Sacora  
Ann Salvato  
Nancy Sawyer  
Gerald Schneider  
Frank J. Smith, III  
Sheila A. Stapanowich  
Levar Stevenson  
Michael Eugene Stredler  
Chris Taylor  
David L. VanderMel  
Robert D.W. White  
Carolyn G. Williams  
Mary Joe Williams  
Deborah Willoughby  
Esther Windmueller  
Davis Shen Wong  
Carey W. Young

### Honorariums

Feb—Sept 15, 2017

Dierdra & Douglass Barnes  
Marty Basden  
Leon Dozier  
Kathy and Sam Finney  
Arlene Goldstein  
Brooks Harris  
Jan Jinright  
Carol & George Maher  
Pamela  
Rex  
Jennifer Rundle  
Kyle Saxton  
Karen Shean  
Sherry Stone  
Theodora Thomas  
Patsy Torrech  
Dick Wilk  
Adm. Robert & Linda  
Papp, USCG, Ret.  
Virginia Oncology  
Associates Staff



[www.ccfot.org](http://www.ccfot.org)



## Give the Gift of Kindness

The holiday hustle & bustle is upon us! It's easy to get caught up in the traditions and celebrations of the season. At their heart, the winter holidays are meant to celebrate love, life and our commitment to each other. What greater joy is there than knowing you are loved and cared for?

This holiday season we ask you to remember those among us battling cancer. Cancer always takes its toll, but the stress can be amplified this time of year.

We urge you to consider a holiday donation or honorarium this year. Show someone you care with a holiday gift to Cancer Care Foundation! Your kindness can warm heart or hearth, sooth a soul or belly and bring hope to the hopeless.

*Give by mail, phone, online or email*

Mail the enclosed giving envelope | phone: 757.461.8488 | web: [www.ccfotidewater.org](http://www.ccfotidewater.org)  
| e-mail: [ccfotidewater@gmail.com](mailto:ccfotidewater@gmail.com)



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## KindnessMatters

Newsletter of Cancer Care Foundation of Tidewater | Winter 2018

We Fight Cancer With Kindness

*This holiday season,  
please consider a gift to  
Cancer Care Foundation  
of Tidewater in your  
United Way pledge*

Simply "write in" our name!

Cancer Care Foundation of Tidewater